

**International Bureau
Presentation on the
2004 ITU World Telecommunication
Standardization Assembly
November 9, 2004**

[As Prepared for Delivery]

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Introduction by Bureau Chief Don Abelson

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and
Commissioners. I have the privilege to
introduce the International Bureau's presentation
on the recent International Telecommunication
Union's (ITU) World Telecommunication
Standardization Assembly or WTSA.

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The WTSA is held every four years and establishes the objectives and work plan for the Telecommunication Standardization Sector of the ITU. During the last year, International Bureau staff worked closely with colleagues throughout the FCC to identify issues of importance to the Commission and to establish our goals for the WTSA. As a result of those efforts, we focused on the issues of digital migration, broadband promotion, and IP-enabled services. Chris Murphy, Chief of the Multilateral Negotiations and Industry Analysis

Branch of the Bureau's Strategic Analysis and
Negotiations Division, and as such the FCC's
WTSA team leader, will report on the Assembly.

Presentation

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners. The U.S. delegation to the WTSA, under the leadership of Ambassador Gross, succeeded in building international consensus to ensure that the ITU's Telecommunication Standardization Sector will continue to be a leading forum for global telecommunications standardization work.

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Although the WTSA was primarily focused on setting the four-year work plan for the Sector, specific concerns voiced by Member States

allow us to extrapolate the larger issues currently facing the ITU.

Notably, many issues raised at the WTSA mirror those currently under scrutiny here at the Commission. As the circuit-switched network of yesteryear gives way to IP-based communications, the ITU, like many of its Member governments around the world, is confronting the profound transformation of the communications marketplace.

The WTSA demonstrated that the changing communications market has caused many countries to re-examine their regulatory models.

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Indeed, going into the meeting, many developing countries voiced concerns that they believed that they had been left out of the standards-making process, that they lacked necessary technical expertise, and that they feared losing revenue to new technologies like VoIP. To address these concerns, the WTSA created a new mechanism for developing countries to participate in the standards-making process and another to gain more information about the technical aspects of

telecommunications networks used for communicating over the Internet.

At the WTSA, it was evident that many countries are uncertain about the impact of IP-enabled services on existing wireline services.

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Nevertheless, the WTSA resoundingly recognized the promise of new technologies.

One of the major objectives of the United States, as well as the majority of the ITU membership, was to re-enforce the ITU as a leading global forum for developing standards for

interoperability between today's networks and those of the next generation.

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Going forward, the FCC team will work to make certain that the ITU and its membership stay focused on the benefits of new technologies and that any actions being considered will create an environment where innovative technologies can flourish. Specifically, we will focus on the following four activities: first, engaging developing countries on achieving low-cost broadband and Internet connectivity; second, capturing the momentum generated by the

WTSA for developing standards for next generation networks by supporting the ITU as a place where industry-led network standards are produced; third, focusing on the importance of making networks secure; and, finally, ensuring that the Internet is not subject to inappropriate regulation.

In closing, the FCC team will continue to contribute to the ITU's work in the years ahead. In addition, many of the issues raised at the WTSA will be revisited in 2005 during the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society. Thus, in the months to

come we will be working to contribute to the
dialogue there as well.

Thank you.